From mountain to sea

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL

Head Teacher Guidance
Non-Engagement with Education (Secondary) during school closures due to Covid-19 pandemic

Updated 30th June 2020

The Scottish Government have announced that schools will re-open on 11th August, with children returning on a full-time basis if we have successfully reached Phase 4 of the Scottish Government Route Map which will be conditional upon ongoing scientific and health advice. This date may fall in Phase 3 or Phase 4, depending on broader progress. The blended model of schooling remains a contingency plan.

It is possible that local lockdowns may be implemented in the future to address local spikes in infections. In this situation schools in the area would close and remote models of learning and teaching would be re-established for the affected school community.

This guidance aims to support schools when a child or young person is not engaging in any online learning during school closures, and the parent or carer remains difficult to contact despite numerous and repeated efforts by school staff.

The guidance was developed in consultation with ASHTA, Children's Services Social Work and Police Scotland.

Non-Engagement with Education (Secondary)

During COVID-19 School Closure

Concerns re: *non-engagement with school
*(No pupil or parent/carer communication = missing)

Any Child Protection concerns?
If **YES**, follow **CP** protocols immediately

Call and email parent/carer

No response after **2 weeks**

Following Education Home Visit Only

5 GIRFEC questions
used to identify concerns and need for next steps

Social Work currently involved with family?

YES

NO

School contact allocated Social Worker to discuss concern

School contact family again via telephone and email stating that they are "concerned for them" and please can they contact school as soon as possible.
School informs them that they will try other emergency contacts that they hold for them

If regular/recent contact with family, SW contact family and request they contact school as soon as possible

School contacts any emergency contacts that they have for child in SEEMIS and explain they are trying to get hold of the family and could they ask them to get in touch with school (no confidential info passed on)

School check with pupil friendship group (if possible) to try to gather any information

If no recent contact with family, agreement between SW and School on next steps, e.g. Social Work or Police Welfare visit

If school has no response from family within 2 school/ working days.

SW contact parent/carer and ask them to contact school within 24 hrs and provide school with update. Further action will continue via GIRFEC process.

Following GIRFEC process, DHT Pupil Support contacts Social Work for discussion prior to possible referral. Next steps agreed between Social Work and School. DHT Pupil Support informs parents/carers

Police Welfare Visit

Discussion with Police Scotland

Social Work Visit

Further Education Action

Appendix 1

Examples of Practice from other Authorities for Supporting Learners who are difficult to reach and are not known to Social Work

Outreach support

- Visit from education staff and/or social work staff to make direct contact with a pupil who has not been engaging in online learning and are 'difficult to reach'.
- Taking resources may be a helpful approach e.g., jotters.
- Trying to ensure a familiar face when planning a visit to the pupil's home
- This support allows staff to see the child(ren) of concern directly; to ascertain that the child/young person is safe.

Safety Measures

- Staff with underlying health conditions or who are pregnant should not make a visit to a pupil's home
- Staff members with any symptoms should not make a visit to a pupil's home
- Staff members with any family member showing symptoms should not make a visit to a pupil's home
- In most circumstances complete the visits in pairs but both staff do not need to approach the property to prevent unnecessary anxiety for the family.
- Ensure handwashing prior to the visit and after the visit
- When at the home ensure discussion takes place 2 metres from the family members and do not enter the property
- If someone at the house declares that a family member has Covid 19 maintain social distancing and minimise the time of the visit.
- If the family are unhappy with the visit; reassure them that you are there to help and that there were concerns for the wellbeing of their child (ren) as it had not been possible to make contact previously via phone call and email.
- If the family continue to be unhappy during the visit leave the setting and report to line manager to discuss next steps